

**As Reported by the House Military and Veterans Affairs
Committee**

**130th General Assembly
Regular Session
2013-2014**

Sub. H. R. No. 283

Representative Young

**Cosponsors: Representatives Adams, J., Beck, Becker, Buchy, Derickson,
Hood, Thompson, Johnson, Retherford, Rosenberger**

RESOLUTION

To urge the United States Congress and the United 1
States Department of Defense to protect and uphold 2
the religious and free speech rights of military 3
service members. 4

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE
OF OHIO:**

WHEREAS, In contrast to civilian society, the military 5
operates under a unique set of rules in order to maintain 6
discipline, to ensure unit cohesion, and to achieve military 7
objectives; and 8

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the United States guarantees the 9
religious and free speech rights of our uniformed service members 10
as those individuals frequently are isolated from their religious 11
communities and lack opportunities for extended personal religious 12
exercise; and 13

WHEREAS, Officers of the Armed Forces, including the Ohio 14
National Guard, are sworn to support and defend the Constitution 15
of the United States; and 16

WHEREAS, Participation in religious services offered by the 17

military is voluntary, and those who choose not to attend are not 18
punished; and 19

WHEREAS, No uniformed service member should be denied the 20
very rights for which they are willing to give their lives; and 21

WHEREAS, Recent events in the United States Armed Forces 22
around the country demonstrate that religious and free speech 23
rights of our military service members have been 24
unconstitutionally treated, as demonstrated in the following 25
nonexhaustive list of examples: 26

(1) In 2012, United States military recruits were presented a 27
detailed equal opportunity training brief that expressly listed 28
Catholicism and Evangelical Christianity as examples of religious 29
extremism alongside such groups as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and the KKK; 30

(2) The United States Military Academy's Combating Terrorism 31
Center released a study linking those that believe in the sanctity 32
of human life to terrorism; 33

(3) The Bible has been purged from Air Force Inn checklists; 34

(4) The Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office removed a 35
reference to God in its logo on its official patch; 36

(5) At the national cemetery in Houston, Texas, Christian 37
prayers were prohibited at funeral services for military veterans; 38

(6) Distribution of Bibles was temporarily banned at the 39
Walter Reed Army Medical Center; 40

(7) Catholic chaplains were prohibited from reading a letter 41
to parishioners from their archbishop regarding the Department of 42
Health and Human Services contraception mandate; and 43

(8) Two chaplains filed a complaint against the Department of 44
Veterans Affairs because of harassment, having been told not to 45
quote scripture in their chaplaincy training class; and 46

WHEREAS, No element of our military can constitutionally 47

penalize or otherwise prohibit religious expression merely because 48
it offends another; and 49

WHEREAS, The readiness of our military is weakened when 50
members' ability to exercise their legitimate rights to religious 51
expression are abridged; and 52

WHEREAS, Recent acts impeding the religious expression of 53
uniformed service members has caused unnecessary contention and 54
disruption in the ranks; and 55

WHEREAS, What happens within our armed services as a whole 56
has an inextricable impact upon the Ohio National Guard, 57
especially when Ohio National Guard units are operating under 58
national command; now therefore be it 59

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the House of 60
Representatives of the State of Ohio, urge the United States 61
Congress and the United States Department of Defense to protect 62
and uphold the religious and free speech rights of military 63
service members; and be it further 64

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the House of 65
Representatives of the State of Ohio, urge the United States 66
Department of Veterans Affairs to respect the freedom of military 67
veterans to practice and express their faith; and be it further 68

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 69
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the 70
Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of 71
Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United 72
States Senate, the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, 73
the United States Secretary of Defense, the United States 74
Department of Veterans Affairs, and the news media of Ohio. 75